

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 /079 W
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R 020500Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY SANA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1398
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL DJIBOUTI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 2091

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, YE, YS
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER ON YARG:PDRY RELATIONS

BEGIN SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO FOREIGN MINISTER AL-ASNAJ
YARG/PDRY RELATIONS CURRENTLY COOL AS IT OBVIOUS ADEN
REGIME HAS NOT MODIFIED ITS EXTREMIST OR PRO-SOVIET
POLICIES. AL-ASNAJ SAID HE HAS BEEN WARNING AL-HAMDI
THAT RAPPROCHEMENT WITH PDRY POSES THREAT TO YARG
MODERATES. AL-HAMDI WHO LISTENS TO AL-ASNAJ MAY NOW BE
INFLUENCED TO SLOW DOWN HIS RECENT EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH
ON-GOING DIALOGUE WITH SOUTH. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING MAY 28 MEETING FOREIGN MINISTER ABDALLAH
AL-ASNAJ DESCRIBED CURRENT PDRY/YARG RELATIONS AS COOL,
DESPITE RECENT SUPERFICIAL SIGNS OF AMITY TO THE CONTRARY.
AL-ASNAJ QUOTED ALGERIAN AMBASSADOR (WHO ALSO ACCREDITED
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TO PDRY) AS SAYING THAT FOLLOWING RECENT TAIZ SUMMIT PPDRY
PRESIDENT LEADERSHIP DOES NOT "TRUST AL-HAMDI" BUT IS WILLING
TO "PLAY ALONG WITH HIM" UNTIL SUCH TIME AS "BOTH AL-HAMDI
AND THE SHAYKHS DISAPPEAR FROM NORTH YEMEN'S POLITICAL
SCENE."

2. AL-ASNAJ CONTINUED TTHAT HE IMMEDIATELY PASSED ON TO

AL-HAMDI THESE QUOTES WITHOUT ANY EMBELLISHMENT OR COMMENT IN ORDER TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE PRESIDENT'S RECENT EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN FRIENDLY AND POSITIVE DIALOGUE WITH PDRY ARE FRAUGHT WITH DANGERS FOR THE MODERATES IN NORTH YEMEN. AL-ASNAJ NOTED IN THIS REGARD THAT APPARENT PDRY INVOLVEMENT IN THE RECENT AL-HAJRI ASSASSINATION ONLY UNDERSCORES THIS DDFGER.

3. AL-ASNAJ WENT ON TO SAY THAT WHILE ALAHAMDI SEEMS TO BE AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF GETTING TOO CLOSE TO PDRY, HE HAS IN THE PAST TRIED TO ESTABLISH GOOD RELATIONS WITH ADEN BOTH AS A WAY TO PROTECT HIS LEFT FLANK AS WELL AS TO BRING PRESSURE ON THE NORTHERN TRIBAL SHAYKHS. AL-ASNAJ OBSERVED THAT AYERA AGO THIS POLICY MAY HAVE BEEN CORRECT ONE TO FOLLOW BUT IN LIGHT OF RECENT REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS RAPPROCHEMENT WITH PDRY POSES GREAT RISKS TO AL-HAMDI AND YEMEN. PDRY HAS SINCE THE TAIZ MEETING SHOWN IT IS STILL CLOSELY FOLLOWING A SOVIET LINE. MOREOVER, PDRY'S SUPPORT FOR ETHIOPIA DEMONSTRATES PDRY'S REAL SENTIMENTS, WHILE HIGHLIGHTING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PDRY AND YARG, WHICH DESPITE ITS DESIRE TO BE NEUTRAL IN ADDIS ABABA/ KHARTOUM DISPUTE IS NOW FULLY BEHIND SUDAN. AL-ASNAJ CONCLUDED BY EXPRESSING CONCERN THAT REGIONAL LEFTISTS WITH SOVIET SUPPORT ARE CURRENTLY FOCUSING ON ENTRENCHING THEMSELVES IN ETHIOPIA AND IF SUCCESSFUL THERE MIGHT WELL USE ETHIOPIA AND PDRY AS BASES TO MAKE OTHER ATTEMPTS TO REASSERT THEMSELVES IN BOTH SUDAN AND NORTH YEMEN.

4. FINALLY, IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION ABOUT RECENT RUMORS
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OF AN AL-HAMDI/RUBAY'S ALI MEETING ON KAMARAN ISLAND IN THE RED SEA, AL-ASNAJ DENIED CATEGORICALLY THAT ANY SUCH MEETING HAD TAKEN PLACE. HE ASSURED ME THAT HE HIMSELF HAD BEEN WITH THE PRESIDENT DURING THE LATTER'S RECENT TRIP TO SALIF AND KAMARAN ISLAND AND KNEW FIRST-HAND WHOM THE PRESIDENT HAD SEEN. AL-ASNAJ NOTED THAT RUBAY'I ALI WOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED BY "THE OTHERS IN THE REGIME" TO MEET WITH AL-HAMDI ON KAMARAN ISLAND, WHICH HAD BEEN FORCIBLY OCCUPIED BY NORTH YEMEN FOLLOWING PDRY INDEPENDENCE AND WHOSE ANNEXATION TO THEY YARG PDRY HAS NEVER RECOGNIZED.

5. COMMENT: AL-ASNAJ HAS LONG BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT THE DEPTH OF MARXIST ENTRENCHMENT IN PDRY AND HAS LONG EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM THAT THE SAUDIS WOULD HAVE ANY MODERATING INFLUENCE OVER THE ADENI REGIME. THE AL-HAJRI ASSASSINATION AND ADENI SUPPORT OF ETHIOPIA HAVE ONLY CONFIRMED WHAT AL-ASNAJ HAS LONG BELIEVED ABOUT THE TRUE LEFTIST OREINTATION OF PDRY. AL-ASNAJ, WHO IS ONE OF THE

FEW MEN AL-HAMDI REPORTEDLY LISTENS TO, CAN BE COUNTED ON, THEREFORE, TO CONTINUE TO WARN AL-HAMDI ABOUT THE PDRY DANGER. IN HTE WAKE OF THE AL-HAJRI MURDER, PARTICULARLY, I WOULD EXPECT THAT AL-ASNAJ'S WORDS MAY FIND AN EVEN MORE SYMPATHETIC RECEPTION AND THAT PDRY/YARG RELATIONS WILL REMAIN COOL OVER THE MONTHS AHEAD.
SCOTES

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